



ALEXIS O'NEILL

LAURA HULISKA-BEITH

THE RECESS QUEEN

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MEAN JEAN

was Recess Queen

and nobody said any different.

Nobody swung

until Mean Jean **SWUNG.**

Nobody kicked

until Mean Jean **KICKED.**

Nobody bounced

until Mean Jean **BOUNCED.**

If kids ever crossed her,

she'd push 'em

and smoosh 'em,

lollapaloosh 'em,

hammer 'em, slammer 'em,

kitz and kajammer 'em . . .

UNTIL

a new kid came

to school. . . .





by Alexis O'Neill

illustrated by
Laura Huliska-Beith

THE RECESS QUEEN

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FLOUR BLUFF
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Summary: Mean Jean is the biggest bully on the school
 playground until a new girl arrives and challenges Jean's
 status as the Recess Queen.

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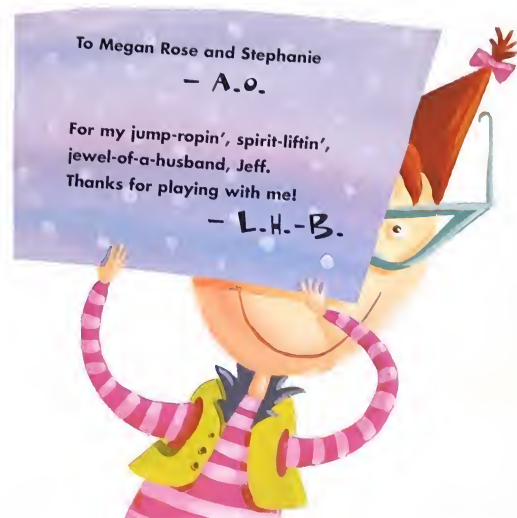
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Thanks to David who is always my first listener,
 to my sister Donna, and
 to all the kids who workshopped this story
 with me at the following schools:
 North Broad Street, Durhamville, Oneida Castle,
 Seneca Street, Willard Prior, and H. W. Smith School.



To Megan Rose and Stephanie
 — A.O.

For my jump-ropin', spirit-liftin',
 jewel-of-a-husband, Jeff,
 Thanks for playing with me!

— L.H.-B.

MEAN JEAN was Recess Queen
and nobody said any different.



Nobody swung until Mean Jean swung.
Nobody kicked until Mean Jean kicked.
Nobody bounced until Mean Jean bounced.





If kids ever crossed her,
she'd push 'em and smoosh 'em,
lollapaloosh 'em,
hammer 'em, slammer 'em,
kitz and kajammer 'em.



"Say **WHAT?**" Mean Jean growled.

"Say **WHO?**" Mean Jean howled.

"Say **YOU!** Just who do you think you're talking to?"

Mean Jean always got her way.

UNTIL one day...





But when the recess bell went ringity-ring,
this kid ran zingity-zing
for the playground gate.

Katie Sue **SWUNG**

before Mean Jean swung.



Katie Sue **KICKED**
before Mean Jean kicked.



Katie Sue **BOUNCED**
before Mean Jean bounced.



The kid you might scare with a jump
and a "Boo!"

was too new

to know about Mean Jean the Recess Queen.



Well, Mean Jean bullied through the playground crowd.
Like always, she pushed kids and smooshed kids,
lollapalooshed kids,
hammered 'em, slammed 'em,
kitz and kajammered 'em
as she charged after that Katie Sue.



"Say **WHAT?**" she growled.
"Say **WHO?**" she howled.
"Say **YOU!**" she snarled and grabbed
Katie Sue by the collar.

"Nobody swings until Queen Jean swings.
Nobody kicks until Queen Jean kicks.
Nobody bounces until Queen Jean bounces,"
and she figured that would
set the record straight.



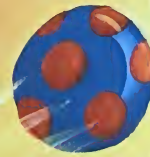
She figured wrong.
Katie Sue talked back!
Just as sassy as could be, she said,
"How **DiD** you get so bossy?"
Then that puny thing
that loony thing,
grabbed the ball and
bounced away.
Oh! Katie Sue was one quick kid.
She bolted quick as lightning.

BOUNCITY BOUNCITY **BOUNCE.**
KICKITY KICKITY **KICK.**
SWINGITY SWINGITY **SWING.**





Mean Jean thundered close behind.



BOUNCITY

KICKITY

SWINGITY.



The Recess Queen was **NOT** amused.

She raced and chased and in-your-faced

that Katie Sue.

No one spoke.

No one moved.

No one **BREATHED**.





Then from her pack pulled Katie Sue
a jump rope clean and bright.

"Hey, Jeanie Beanie," sang Katie Sue.

"Let's try this jump rope out!"

Here's one thing true — until that day

no one **DARED** ask Mean Jean to play.

But that Katie Sue just hopped and jumped and skipped away.

"I like ice cream,
I like tea,
I want Jean to
jump with me!"





Jean just gaped and stared
as if too **SCARED**
to move at all.



So Katie Sue sang once more.
"I like popcorn,
I like tea,
I want Jean to
jump with me!"



Then from the side a kid called out,
"GO, JEAN, GO!"

And too surprised to even shout,
Jean jumped in with Katie Sue.

"I like cookies,
I like tea,
I want YOU to
jump with me!"



The rope whizzed and slapped,

FASTER,

FASTER,

the rope spun and flapped,

FASTER,

FASTER!

Till it caught in a tangled disaster.

But they just giggled and

JUMPED AGAIN!



WELL — now when recess rolls around

that playground's one great place.

At the school bell's ringity-ring

those two girls race zingity-zing

out the classroom door.

Jean doesn't push kids and smooch kids,

lollapaloosh kids,

hammer 'em, slammer 'em,

kitz and kajammer 'em—

'cause she's having too much fun

rompity-romping with

her **FRIENDS.**





Bouncity, kickity, swingity,

Hoppity, skippity, jumpity,

Ringity, zingity,

YESSSSSSS!

ALEXIS O'NEILL'S favorite part of the day is recess. When she's not playing hopscotch or jumping rope, she writes books and magazine articles for kids and teaches writing.

Her first picture book, **LOUD EMILY**, illustrated by Nancy Carpenter, received great acclaim, including KIRKUS'S rave, "O'Neill's language



has a roll and a verve that captures her young heroine's spirit perfectly."

A former elementary school teacher, she lives in Simi Valley, California, with her husband, David, and their three very bossy cats.

LAURA HULISKA-BEITH made a splash on the children's book scene with her first picture book, **THE BOOK OF BAD IDEAS**, inspired by countless funny escapades with her siblings while growing up in Omaha, Nebraska.


SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL called it "Not your typical picture book. . . . A delightfully funny offering."



She lives with her husband, Jeff, and their two jump-rope-loving dogs in Kansas City, Missouri.

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